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Follow-up to the International Year of Human Rights Learning

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 64/82, concerning the follow-up to the International Year of Human Rights Learning, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-sixth session a report on the implementation of the resolution.

The report provides information about initiatives undertaken at the international level during the period from August 2009 and June 2011 to advance human rights education and learning in follow-up to the International Year. It highlights activities carried out in the context of the World Programme for Human Rights Education and the drafting and adoption by the Human Rights Council of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training. The report concludes that United Nations initiatives, such as the World Programme, the United Nations Declaration and the International Year, contribute to increasing global awareness of human rights and the role of human rights education and learning as significant instruments in promoting and protecting human rights throughout the world.

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I. Introduction

1. By resolution 62/171, the General Assembly decided that the year commencing on 10 December 2008 should be proclaimed the International Year of Human Rights Learning, called upon Member States to intensify their efforts to promote human rights learning and education at the local, national and international levels and, to that end, encouraged cooperation at all levels and with all relevant stakeholders. By resolution 63/173, the Assembly urged Member States, in coordination with relevant stakeholders and with the support and collaboration of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Human Rights Council, to develop international strategies and/or regional, national and local plans of action aimed at broad-based and sustained human rights learning at all levels. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it on the implementation of both resolutions at its sixty-fourth session.

2. Accordingly, at its sixty-fourth session, the General Assembly had before it a report of the Secretary-General (A/64/293), which provided information on the initiatives undertaken up to August 2009 to achieve the objectives of the International Year. In resolution 64/82, the Assembly, acknowledging that civil society, academia, the private sector, the media and, where appropriate, parliamentarians could play an important role in the promotion and implementation of learning about human rights, encouraged action aimed at broad-based and sustained human rights learning at all levels by a variety of stakeholders. It called upon the High Commissioner and the Human Rights Council to support, cooperate and collaborate closely with civil society, the private sector, academia, regional organizations, the media and other relevant stakeholders, as well as with organizations, programmes and funds of the United Nations system, in efforts to develop, in particular, the design of strategies and international, regional, national and local programmes of action aimed at such learning. In the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-sixth session a report on the implementation of the resolution.

3. The present report covers the period from August 2009 to June 2011 and describes human rights education, training and learning initiatives undertaken in follow-up to the International Year, which were facilitated by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), particularly in the context of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-ongoing), as well as the standard-setting efforts of the Human Rights Council with relation to the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training.

II. World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-ongoing)

A. Global coordination of the World Programme

4. The World Programme for Human Rights Education was proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 59/113 A as an ongoing global initiative, structured in consecutive phases which were scheduled to begin on 1 January 2005. In accordance with the plan of action adopted by the Assembly in resolution 59/113 B (see A/59/525/Rev.1), the first phase (2005-2007) was focused on the

integration of human rights education into primary and secondary school systems. Subsequently, by resolution 6/24, the Human Rights Council extended the first phase of the plan for two more years, until December 2009.

5. The second phase (2010-2014) of the World Programme is focused on human rights education in higher education and on human rights training for teachers and educators, civil servants, law enforcement officials and military personnel. The related plan of action (see A/HRC/15/28) was adopted by the Human Rights Council in resolution 15/11.

6. During the reporting period, OHCHR continued to promote the plans of action for the first and second phases and to assist Member States in their implementation at the national level. OHCHR frequently interacted with a wide range of actors, such as Governments, United Nations entities and other intergovernmental organizations, as well as civil society, it provided information, publications, advice and other support and it participated in relevant events.

B. Evaluation of the implementation of the plan of action for the first phase (2005-2009)

7. During the period from August 2009 to mid-2010, OHCHR continued to provide the secretariat for the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Human Rights Education in the School System, which had been established in September 2006 in the context of the World Programme's first phase with the aim of facilitating coordinated United Nations support for the national implementation of human rights education in primary and secondary school systems.[1]

8. During the period between the last quarter of 2009 and mid-2010, the Coordinating Committee carried out the final evaluation of national implementation of the first phase (2005-2009) of the World Programme, in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 12/4. The Coordinating Committee held its seventh and final meeting on 3 December 2009 when it discussed in particular the evaluation methodology and agreed on an evaluation questionnaire developed for that purpose.

9. The final evaluation report (A/65/322), elaborated on the basis of 76 national reports, was submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session. According to the report, Member States had taken some measures to integrate human rights education in their school systems; particularly notable progress had been made in making human rights education part of national curricula. A number of national initiatives were reported, in terms of policy and action to foster a culture of respect for human rights in daily school life. The report identified certain gaps in implementation, which suggested the need for a more comprehensive and systematic approach at the national level. Accordingly, Member States were encouraged to

[1] The Coordinating Committee was composed of the following entities: International Labour Organization, OHCHR, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, United Nations Development Group, United Nations Development Programme, Department of Public Information, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and its International Bureau of Education, United Nations Population Fund, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and World Bank. The Council of Europe participated as an observer. More information about the Inter-Agency Committee is available from www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/UN-inter-agency.htm.

consolidate progress further by continuing implementation in line with the guidance provided by the plan of action.

10. The Office of the High Commissioner has been disseminating the findings of the final evaluation in its contacts with various human rights education stakeholders. The final evaluation report and individual national submissions are available for consultation on a dedicated web page, which also contains the national reports submitted by Governments after the finalization of the evaluation report.[2]

11. On 12 June 2010, the Coordinating Committee issued a third joint statement on the occasion of the World Day against Child Labour, urging Member States to further promote human rights education as a means of achieving the goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by 2016.[3]

12. The mandate of the Coordinating Committee expired with the conclusion of the first phase of the World Programme. OHCHR, however, continues to collaborate on a regular basis with other United Nations entities in the global promotion of human rights education.

C. Launch of the second phase (2010-2014) and adoption of the related plan of action

13. Pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 10/3, the High Commissioner consulted with Member States, national human rights institutions and international and non-governmental organizations on the possible focus for the second phase of the World Programme. In August 2009, the findings of the consultation were presented to the Council (A/HRC/12/36). To stimulate discussions and facilitate the decision-making on the focus and length of the second phase, the Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO) convened in Geneva, on 18 September 2009, a panel which discussed the transition from the first to the second phase of the World Programme. Panellists included representatives of the sponsoring Government (Costa Rica), OHCHR, the Advisory Council on Human Rights of Morocco and two civil society organizations.

14. The Human Rights Council, by resolution 12/4, decided to focus the second phase (2010-2014) on higher education and on human rights training programmes for teachers and educators, civil servants, law enforcement officials and military personnel at all levels, and encouraged Member States that had not yet done so to incorporate human rights education in primary and secondary school systems. The Council requested OHCHR to prepare, in cooperation with relevant intergovernmental organizations, in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and non-governmental actors, to consult States on and submit to it for consideration at its fifteenth session a plan of action for the second phase.

15. Accordingly, OHCHR, in consultation with UNESCO and other stakeholders, elaborated a draft plan of action for the second phase (see A/HRC/15/28). The draft

[2] See www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/evaluationWPHRE.htm.

[3] The full text of the statement is available from www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/joint_statements.htm.

plan, which was submitted to Governments for review and revised in the light of their comments, was adopted by the Council at its fifteenth session (resolution 15/11). During that session, the CONGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning convened a discussion panel with the participation of OHCHR and sponsoring Governments, aimed at increasing awareness of the plan of action for the second phase and at promoting its implementation.

16. The plan of action for the second phase provides a general framework for action by Governments and substantive practical guidance for national implementation. It defines human rights education as "any learning, education, training and information efforts aimed at building a universal culture of human rights" (A/HRC/15/28, para. 3). It stresses that "all the components and processes of learning, including curricula, materials, methods and training, should be conducive to the learning of human rights" (A/HRC/15/28, para. 22 (a)) and it promotes the use of learner-centred methods and approaches, the active involvement of learners in learning processes, and the review and revision of teaching and learning materials to ensure that they conform to human rights principles (A/HRC/15/28, paras. 28 and 44).

17. Together with UNESCO, OHCHR is currently implementing dissemination strategies for the plan of action, targeting relevant human rights education stakeholders, including Governments, national human rights institutions, civil society organizations, higher education institutions and intergovernmental organizations.

18. In accordance with Council resolution 15/11, OHCHR will submit a progress report on the implementation of the World Programme to the Human Rights Council at its last session in 2012.

D. Activities aimed at information sharing

19. The Office of the High Commissioner has continued to raise awareness of human rights education initiatives at various levels through information sharing and networking activities.[4] OHCHR has maintained and further expanded the web pages[5] on the World Programme, which are available in English, French and Spanish. The pages contain, inter alia, information received from Governments on national initiatives related to human rights education in schools and on overall national plans and strategies for human rights education.

20. The Office of the High Commissioner has supported the documentation, collection and dissemination of good practices on human rights education at the regional level. A compendium of good practice was developed and published jointly in October 2009 by OHCHR, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, UNESCO and the Council of Europe. The publication, entitled *Human Rights Education in the School Systems of Europe, Central Asia and North America: A Compendium of*

[4] More information on the activities is available from www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/index.htm.

[5] See www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/programme.htm.

Good Practice, is available in English and Russian, in print, as a CD and in an attractive electronic format.[6]

21. The Office has continued to develop and disseminate selected human rights training and education materials and methodologies based on good practice.[7] In March 2011, it published, jointly with EQUITAS-The International Centre for Human Rights Education, *Evaluating Human Rights Training Activities: A Handbook for Human Rights Educators*,[8] which is aimed at supporting the rigorous, systematic and continuous evaluation of human rights training activities for adult learners with a view to maximizing and measuring training impact. The handbook, building on existing research and practice in educational evaluation, equips human rights educators with basic knowledge in evaluation and provides step-by-step guidance, including examples of tools and techniques that can be adapted to different contexts. Another methodological tool currently being finalized is a self-assessment guide for Governments on the integration of human rights education into the school system.

22. Two major resources developed by OHCHR are the Resource Collection on Human Rights Education and Training and the database on human rights education and training. The Resource Collection, a specialized section of the OHCHR library in Geneva, gathers more than 2,000 human rights education and training materials from around the world; more than 400 new acquisitions were added in the period under review.[9] The database is intended to facilitate the sharing of information in regard to learning programmes and educational institutions throughout the world,[10] and contains information on the programmes of over 1,100 human rights institution and 350 human rights training. The database has various functions which make it user-friendly and interactive. Most notably, a multiple search option allows users to carry out a customized search for institutions and programmes by programme or institution type, country and target group. New entries are added on a regular basis.

23. With a view to globally disseminating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, OHCHR maintains an extensive collection of the Declaration in various languages and dialects, all available from the OHCHR website, and a collection of printed and other material. Both collections were initiated in the context of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004) and have grown steadily over the years. At present, the text of the Universal Declaration is available in over 375 national and local languages and dialects, and the collection of materials now comprises more than 350 items, such as printed materials, audio-visual resources and a broad range of commemorative items.

24. As part of its daily outreach activities, OHCHR has responded to human rights education queries from governmental and non-governmental entities, including academia, and provided related reference services and other guidance. OHCHR grants, publications, the participation of specialized OHCHR staff and other

[6] Available from www.ohchr.org/EN/PublicationsResources/Pages/TrainingEducation.aspx.

[7] OHCHR publications, including relevant electronic versions, are available from www.ohchr.org/EN/PublicationsResources/Pages/Publications.aspx.

[8] Available in English from http://equitas.org/en/popular/may-10-2011-publication-of-evaluating-human-rights-training-activities-a-handbook-for-human-rights-educators/. French and Spanish versions will be available in December and September 2011, respectively.

[9] The catalogue is available from www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/collection.htm.

[10] The database can be accessed at http://hre.ohchr.org/hret.

contributions have supported the international and regional human rights education activities organized by other actors.

25. The Council of Europe has initiated an international contact group on citizenship and human rights education to ensure close cooperation among regional and international initiatives in the field of citizenship and human rights education, including the sharing of information and the implementation of joint activities. Current members include the Council of Europe, the European Commission, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, OHCHR, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and UNESCO. Cooperation with other regional organizations will be further explored.

26. National human rights institutions are key actors in human rights education and, during the twenty-third and twenty-fourth annual meetings of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights held in Geneva in 2010 and 2011, thematic sessions were convened on human rights education. At the twenty-third meeting, a panel discussion of developments in human rights education and training was held on 25 March 2010, with panellists representing the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, the national human rights institution of Morocco and OHCHR. At the twenty-fourth meeting, a thematic panel discussion of national human rights institutions and human rights education and training was held on 18 May 2011. Panellists representing the national human rights institutions of Morocco, Ireland, El Salvador and India exchanged their experiences in promoting a human rights culture through human rights education and training.

E. Supporting national capacities and civil society initiatives

27. National capacities for human rights education and training have been supported through OHCHR field presences and headquarters. OHCHR has enhanced its efforts to strengthen national capacities for human rights training of military, police and other staff deployed to peacekeeping operations. It has also developed and implemented, in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the OHCHR/UNITAR Human Rights Orientation Programme for Diplomats. The programme is aimed at enhancing understanding by governmental officials of OHCHR and the United Nations human rights protection system. Since 2009, programmes have been organized each year in Geneva and New York, and one has been held in Addis Ababa. Training courses on human rights monitoring methodologies for national human rights institutions were held in Djibouti, Ecuador, the United Republic of Tanzania and Thailand. The United Nations Training and Documentation Centre for South-West Asia and the Arab Region, located in Doha, focused in 2010 on establishing its presence in the region as a partner for building the human rights capacity of duty bearers and rights holders, and as a centre of excellence for learning, documentation and the exchange of positive practice. A human rights Masters programme, the first of its kind in the Russian Federation, has been established through a joint project of OHCHR, the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation and the Russian University Consortium; OHCHR has also facilitated the creation of an inter-university resource centre for research on human rights issues and provided the centre with equipment.

28. A significant number of human rights training activities has been carried out by various OHCHR field presences. A non-exhaustive list of the activities[11] includes training on human rights monitoring during elections in Guinea and Uganda, human rights training for security forces in Togo and Sierra Leone, training for civil society on human rights advocacy in Côte d'Ivoire, and training for judicial actors in Darfur and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In Cambodia, OHCHR supported the development of a comprehensive training plan for prison staff, which was subsequently approved by the Ministry of Interior. In Peru, a training course on indigenous people's rights was organized for judges and public prosecutors. In Nepal, workshops on monitoring economic, social and cultural rights were organized for local government officials, civil society organizations and community-based groups. Targeted training on the justiciability and domestic application of economic, social and cultural rights was provided to local actors in the West Africa region. In Haiti, OHCHR supported, through training on protection issues and by other means, the integration of internally displaced persons and, in particular, involvement of women's groups in the management of camps for internally displaced persons and the drawing up of protection strategies in their areas of residence. Workshops on the right to adequate housing were held in Serbia. In Timor-Leste, technical advice and training were provided to government officials and civil society organizations to strengthen national institutions and promote transitional justice.

29. With respect to training on United Nations human rights mechanisms, workshops on the universal periodic review process were organized in a number of regions and countries, including the Middle East, the Niger, Somalia, Myanmar, Honduras, Panama and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. OHCHR also conducted training on the reporting and implementation of recommendations of United Nations treaty bodies. In 2010, a total of 12 capacity-building and training activities concerning the common core document and treaty-specific guidelines, reporting, individual communications and follow-up to recommendations were carried out with State parties, at their request, in Bahrain, Belarus, Cape Verde, China (Hong Kong SAR), Japan, Kazakhstan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Mexico, Peru, Qatar, Senegal and Turkmenistan.

30. The Assisting Communities Together (ACT) project is a joint initiative of OHCHR and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in support of grass-roots human rights education initiatives in selected countries. Since its launch in 1998, the project has provided small grants to over 700 national and local civil society organizations.[12] The seventh phase (2011-2012) of the project was launched by OHCHR and UNDP in April 2011 and is focused in particular on support for activities which counter discrimination on any ground and in regard to any group, in line with one of the six thematic priorities of OHCHR for the biennium 2010-2011. In 2011, OHCHR and UNDP will award grants in 14 countries.[13]

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[11] For more complete information, see *OHCHR Report 2010*, available from www2.ohchr.org/english/ohchrreport2010/web_version/ohchr_report2010_web/index.html#/home.

[12] See www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/act.htm.

[13] Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Djibouti, Ecuador, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iraq, Kosovo, Mauritania, Republic of Moldova, Senegal, Togo, Uganda and Uruguay.

III. United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training

31. During the reporting period, OHCHR continued to facilitate the initiative of the Human Rights Council, led by the Platform for Human Rights Education and Training,[14] to develop a United Nations declaration on human rights education and training. This initiative was launched in September 2007 by the Human Rights Council in resolution 6/10, by which it requested the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee to prepare the draft. Between August 2008 and January 2010, a drafting group of the Advisory Committee worked on its development, and a draft declaration was transmitted by the Advisory Committee to the Council for consideration at its thirteenth session, in accordance with both Council resolution 6/10 and resolution 10/28.[15]

32. The draft declaration transmitted by the Advisory Committee was discussed at a high-level meeting of the Council, held during its thirteenth session. The Council, by resolution 13/15, decided to establish an open-ended intergovernmental working group which would meet for a maximum of five working days prior to its sixteenth session to negotiate, finalize and submit to the Council the draft declaration on the basis of the draft submitted by the Advisory Committee.

33. Prior to the convening of the working group, the Platform for Human Rights Education and Training held, on 24 June, 3 September and 14 December 2010, open-ended informal consultations on the text submitted by the Advisory Committee, which it subsequently revised.

34. The working group, for which OHCHR provided the secretariat, met in Geneva from 10 to 14 January 2011 to negotiate and finalize the draft United Nations declaration, which it adopted and transmitted to the Human Rights Council for consideration at its sixteenth session.[16] The Council, by resolution 16/1 of 23 March, adopted the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training and recommended it for adoption by the General Assembly.[17]

35. The Declaration defines human rights education and training as "all educational, training, information, awareness-raising and learning activities aimed at promoting universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and thus contributing to, inter alia, the prevention of human rights violations and abuses by providing persons with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviours, to empower them to contribute to the building and promotion of a universal culture of human rights" (art. 2.1).

36. Civil society contributed to the drafting process by providing written input, delivering written and oral statements during the Council's sessions, and

[14] The Platform for Human Rights Education and Training is an informal, cross-regional governmental group consisting of Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, the Philippines, Senegal, Slovenia and Switzerland.

[15] See the report of the Advisory Committee on its fourth session (A/HRC/AC/4/4), recommendation 4/2.

[16] See also the report of the open-ended working group (A/HRC/WG.9/1/3).

[17] The text of the Declaration as adopted by the Council is contained in the annex to resolution 16/1.

participating, inter alia, in the three informal consultations and meetings of the open-ended working group. The Geneva-based CONGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning organized two panel discussions of the draft declaration, in parallel with the thirteenth and sixteenth sessions of the Council (on 17 March 2010 and 11 March 2011, respectively), which brought together representatives of sponsoring Governments, national human rights institutions, academia and non-governmental organizations active in the area of human rights education.

37. The Office of the High Commissioner has developed a web page dedicated to the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training. The web page[18] will be updated to reflect the consideration of the Declaration by the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session.

IV. Conclusions

38. In follow-up to the International Year of Human Rights Learning which commenced on 10 December 2008, many efforts have been devoted internationally to human rights education and learning. This reflects a growing interest in human rights education and learning among governmental bodies, national human rights institutions, intergovernmental organizations and civil society actors. The synergy among such international initiatives as the International Year of Human Rights Learning, the World Programme for Human Rights Education and the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training has stimulated overall progress in human rights education and learning, including the development of national strategies, an expansion of national, regional and international cooperation, a greater number of information-sharing resources and methodological tools and an increased commitment by Governments at the international level, which can have a positive impact on the sustainability of national efforts.

[18] http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/UNDHREducationTraining.htm.